Learning Conversation Notes	
Name of Partner: Placer Multi-Disciplinary Interview Center	Date: 01-25-2006
Number of Children Served: 45	Ages: 0 yr (3), 1 yr (6), 2 yr (6), 3 yr (10), 4 yr (11), 5 yr (9)
When Served: March 24 – December 31, 2005	Gender: Ethnicity: 17 -Male 40 - Caucasian 28-Female 1 - African Amer. 4 - Hispanic

Conversation Participants: Patsie Fletcher, Angela Ford, Noelle Voorhees, Jo McCormack, Bob McDonald, Michael Romero, Nancy Baggett, Fiona Tuttle, Dolleen Toms, Janice Critchlow, Janis Wikoff

Outcomes:

- As a result of involvement in the Multi-Disciplinary Interview Center (MDIC) process, children's trauma is reduced, and families are supported.
- Sustain the team that utilizes the MDIC interview process.

Performance Measures:

- 1. Demographics (age, gender and when services were provided)
- 2. Follow up survey to measure degree of family support and child well being.
- 3. Number of children who had to be re-interviewed by members of the investigation team after the initial interview.
- 4. Follow-up contact with the victim and family after their interview to identify number of resources within the county that were utilized for the child.
- 5. Dispositions of cases.
- 6. Interviews conducted at MDIC, listed by referring agencies.
- 7. Summary of participants at monthly team meetings.

What is this data telling us about achievement of outcomes?

As a result of involvement in the MDIC process, children's trauma is reduced and the families report that they feel supported.

MDIC continues to work on sustaining the team, which in turns sustains the MDIC program to benefit child victims in Placer County.

Data was separated by date (March 2005-June 2005 and July 2005-December 2005). The number of children served include both the children 0-5 interviewed as the primary victim and their siblings aged 0-5. The reason both primary victims and their siblings are reported is that the incidents not only effect the primary victims but also effects their siblings and the entire family (see attachment for breakdown)

If this trend in numbers served continues, it appears that MDIC is on track to interview more kids this year.

There are a large number of children being interviewed before they enter school (prior to turning 6) this is due in large part to the changing attitudes and increased awareness.

From June1, 2005 through Dec 31, 2005, the MDIC has not interviewed any children ages 0-2- this could be a result of the developmental ability of children in this age group to verbally communicate.

Between January 2005 and December 2005, MDIC interviewed 106 in Placer County.

The MDIC has seen a rise in number of boys interviewed as victims in the last reporting period, and the trend of increased disclosure by boys continues. However, more females have been interviewed as victims.

The ethnicity data mirrors the Placer County population.

Data from follow up survey measures family support, child well being, and resources utilized was reviewed (see attached data for more information).

The number of children who had to be re-interviewed during this period was 0. This is a positive statistic, as it protects children from being re-traumatized over and over again. Though it is not always bad to re-interview children, because of varying child behaviors/moods or additional disclosures. Expertise has increased in the interviewing process and amongst agencies involved in the interviews which is the main reason for decreasing the number of re-interviews.

With regard to the disposition of the 80 cases involving felony child abuse (including all children 0-18), 27 were accepted for prosecution by the DA's office, 28 were declined, and the remaining 25 have not been decided on. Decisions are made based how much evidence there is to "make the case". There are many reasons why a case would be "declined". Sometimes when cases are counted as "declined" for criminal prosecution, HHS is getting cooperation from families and services are being provided. Others were "declined" by the DA's office or law enforcement agencies, or entered a CPS process.

Referrals to MDIC by law enforcement are very reflective of Placer County (see attached data source). If social services schedules an interview, MDIC makes sure that they are working with law enforcement. Occasionally, the MDIC may interview a child as a courtesy for an out of county law enforcement agency. Surprised that Rocklin data has stayed the same, expectation is that it would be higher because of growth in population and high 0-5. The School resource officer has improved personnel in Auburn. Lincoln may change in near future also due to personnel changes. Changing personnel could be a reason why there are different levels in representation from law enforcement agencies. This graph was just dispersed to all of the law enforcement chiefs in Placer County.

With regard to follow up on the 80 interviews of alleged felony child maltreatment, 45 children served were ages 0-5 (these 45 children were members of 32 families). The MDIC was able to successfully contact 20 of the 32 families to participate in the follow up survey process.

Of the abuse impacting these 32 families, 15 cases were "in-home" abuse, 16 were "out-of home" abuse and 1 was unknown. Interesting that the split was almost 50% "out-of home" abuse and 50% "in-home" abuse. This will be an interesting statistic to track over a longer period of time.

Survey results from the 20 families responding, indicates that most (69%) had a very positive experience. In the case of the 4 neutral responses, neutral can be an expected response. The parents do not come out feeling positive though the kids may. In the case of 2 negative, that is always a possible result. The parents are often more upset than the children. The children will do better if the parents also do well. The parent is happy to see that the child has benefited from the process. The parents are dealing with their own issues. Most parents don't want their children to feel pain. A child may feel better walking out of center but problems are deep seeded and there should be no mistake about the long-term effects of abuse. There is a definite need for follow up treatment and counseling.

Both law enforcement and Child Protective Services (CPS) involvement is necessary as demonstrated by the fact that 50% of the suspected cases occur "in-home".

Survey results show 6 out of 20 are planning to enter counseling and others are using the following resources: (6) HOPES, (4) PEACE, (2) PCOE Child Care, Crises Center, and Child/Adult Emergency Protective Services (ACCESS). The MDIC Team would prefer to see more children/families in counseling and will explore the idea of ACCESS requiring counseling as a follow up.

When asked if they felt more comfortable as a result of being through the MDIC process, parents responding with the following:

- 13 out of 20 were somewhat comfortable.
- 5 out of 20 were somewhat to extremely comfortable.
- 2 out of 20 were neutral

When parents were asked if they child felt more comfortable as a result of being through the MDIC process, they responded with the following:

13 out of 20 were very comfortable 5 out of 20 were extremely uncomfortable 2 out of 20 were neutral

Sustainability of the MDIC Team:

Group "buy-in" by team agencies and members is very important to sustain the success of the MDIC. The Team works to train together which has resulted in successful participation. Team meetings are held in various locations throughout the county which has helped with engaging different agencies. Additionally, the

strong leadership and coordination of the MDIC Coordinator has been of great importance in building the MDIC Team.

MDIC sees increased sustainability through: the ability to obtain grant funding for excellent training, the ability to send team members to national and statewide training as a group, working on the 4th attempt to succeed with legislation and strategies around advocacy, successful grant writing has been success to bring in additional funds. As part of the MDIC Team efforts in looking for multiple funding sources, a discussion at a PLEA meeting encouraged the possibility of obtaining funding from the county. Additionally, MDIC is also looking at the possibility of obtaining 501C(3) status. As the Child and Family Mental Health Advocate, Noelle will be working about 10 hours a week as a volunteer, this will help with funding for the overall MDIC project.

The total MDIC revenue in 2005 was \$130,262. With funding through First 5, the MDIC has been able to continue the growth of a success program, the clerical position has proven to be critical.

In what ways will we apply what we have learned from our data? Children and families are having a positive experience at MDIC-the interview process has been very effective.

Most of our referred cases continue to be child sexual abuse

Follow up is needed for children and families that have been through the MDIC, the Child and Family Mental Health Advocate is much needed. Ongoing funding needs to be secured.

Open-ended survey questions bring good answers and results. This is a good example of how to handle qualitative data. It is very good to see percentages and numbers. It seems to work better to do the survey sooner versus later.

MDIC sees that it is critical for the interviewer to connect with the kids-the child should be treated as the top priority. Training and experience are crucial as it aids the interviewer in relating to the child. Strategies by MDIC interviewer are powerful and bring results.

The MDIC Team continues to be sustainable despite personnel changes. Changes in the law enforcement and CPS personnel requires follow up by the team and additional training.

It was helpful to implement the strategy of tracking "in-home" versus "out-of home" abuse cases.

With regard to the questionnaire, it is more beneficial to follow up with the families sooner vs later. Additionally, the scale should be changed (ie: use a scale of 0-3).

Learning Conversations would be helpful to the MDIC Team every six months.

It would be helpful to have the referring agency data reported on just for the children ages 0-5.

Consideration should be given to mapping the MDIC cases on Geographic Information Systems (GIS). GIS would map out the areas that cases are occurring. This could help with big picture services, outside of law enforcement. Mike will create this for a MDIC steering committee meeting to see if it is helpful to the team. This could be very significant as far as looking at service in pocket areas.

Other points that were made during the conversation:

Early detection of abuse is important as abuse does slow down a child's development. Children ages 0-5 are able to be articulate in their own ways about trauma that has occurred. A lot has been learned in this area for children that are young victims.

MDIC strategies used include careful public discussion when outside of the MDIC environment. The MDIC is a place and process for families to come when there are alleged felonies against children. Family gets to meet members of team who will be involved in their life for the next bit of time. It is a kid friendly environment and they feel that it is a place for them. The child is interviewed on videotape in a forensically sound way to both gather information and determine if the child would be a good witness. The Interviewer is honest about the process of the interview with the child. Law Enforcement, District Attorney, CPS, Victim Witness, etc. feed questions to the Interviewer through an ear device. Victim Witness works with the family to share resources and provide support while the child is being interviewed. The MDIC process is very structured and provides steps for the family to talk. In Placer County, there are some trained Hispanic interviewers. In other counties there are full time Spanish speaking interviewers and investigators. Placer is working to address the need for dealing with interpretation of language in emergencies. There are huge issues in dealing with this subject matter in different cultural settings as well.

National statistics indicate that 1 out of 4 girls are victims and now that society is more aware that abuse occurs for boys, it is being reported and investigated more frequently. As a county, Placer's victims mirror the national statistics.

The revenue chart (see attached document) is beneficial and allows the First 5 Placer Commission and other agencies to clearly see funding sources.

Next Steps:

Show children ages 0-5 separately from other ages and divide graph by age.

Regarding Performance Measure #5 further define what a "declined case" means, additionally break out criminal disposition, CPS, etc.